

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 5 May 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
5 MAY 1967

1. Soviet Union

The principal conclusions of the National Intelligence Estimate "Soviet Attitudes and Intentions toward the War in Vietnam" just approved by the US Intelligence Board are:

- The Soviet leaders probably believe there is no prospect of movement toward a political solution for several months, and that they have no alternative but to help North Vietnam carry on the war, hoping that changes in attitude in either Hanoi or Washington will permit a political solution later.
- The Russians fear that the US, in its impatience to get the war over, will escalate the conflict in a way which will increase the risks and costs for Moscow; in an effort to forestall this they are stressing their intention to move to more vigorous support of North Vietnam.
- Peking will probably not pose serious obstacles to the continued transit of military supplies across China.
- Hanoi at some point will probably press Moscow for more sophisticated equipment than those types now on the scene. There is a good chance that under pressure the Soviets would provide such weapons as cruise missiles and tactical rockets.
- If the conflict were to be intensified by the US the Soviets at some point would probably create an atmosphere of heightened tension. They might provide limited numbers of volunteers or crews for defense equipment or aircraft. The mining or blockade of the North Vietnamese coast would be most likely to provoke these responses. Moscow is probably not prepared to resort to direct threats of general war as a means to protect North Vietnam.

2. South Vietnam

[redacted] assessment of Buddhism as a political force between now and the September elections:

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- The Buddhist movement, largely because of government surveillance of the militant leaders and the adoption of tough control measures, is less a threat to political stability than at any time since 1963.
- Tri Quang is the sole leader of the militants, and the only Buddhist capable of directing antigovernment activities. Tam Chau, the moderate Buddhist leader, is no organizer and has no devoted activist following.
- Tri Quang can probably control only 180,000 votes, but he can inspire others to action.
- There is no hard evidence that the Buddhists are controlled by the Viet Cong, although their antics frequently serve the Viet Cong cause.
- Come September, the Buddhists will flock to the polls rather than the barricades.

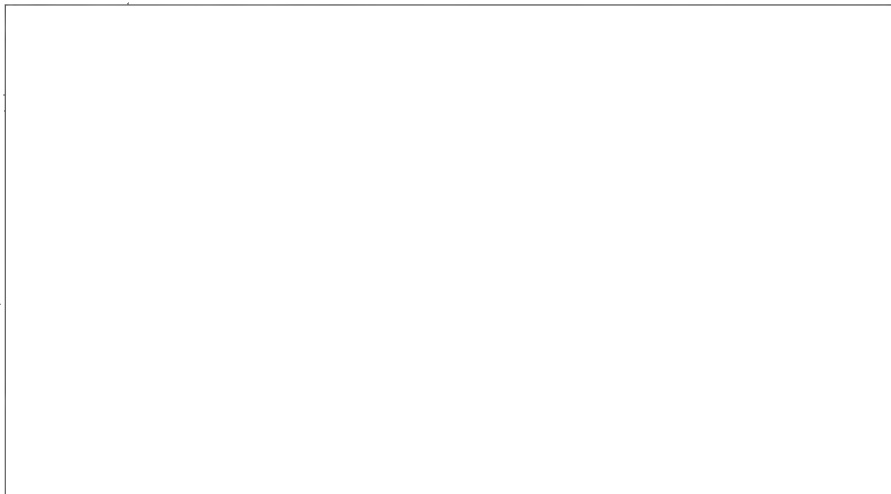
3. South Korea

President Pak's victory in the presidential election assures a continuation of moderate leadership stressing economic improvement. Pak's large margin--won over the same opponent he narrowly defeated four years ago--will give him some new muscle to help control the factional fighting in his Democratic Republican Party.

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4. Yemen



5. Cuba

We have re-examined the evidence-- including recent reports and rumors in the press--and find nothing to change our conclusion that no strategic weapons, nuclear warheads, or Soviet combat troops have been reintroduced into Cuba.

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